



STATISTICS  
CONCERNING THE  
PATIENTS ADMITTED WITH ALCOHOLIC SYMPTOMS  
TO THE ROYAL INFIRMARY, EDINBURGH,

*For the Five Years from October 1, 1889, to September 20, 1894.*

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THE following statistics deal with the total admissions, both into the medical side and into the surgical side, of patients suffering from the recent effects of alcoholic excess. It is self-evident that an attempt to include the remote effects, as, for instance, cirrhosis of the liver or of the kidneys, would vitiate the results, not to speak of the difficulty of obtaining trustworthy data of these cases on which to form a reliable opinion.

The total number of such cases was 1264, with 44 deaths, or a mortality of 3·4 per cent.

Of the 1264, 935 were males, with 38 deaths, or 4 per cent., and 329 females, of whom only 6 died, or 1·8 per cent.

The totals in the different years were as follows :—

|              |      |        |           |                      |
|--------------|------|--------|-----------|----------------------|
| 1889-90..... | 268, | or 3·3 | per cent. | of total admissions. |
| 1890-91..... | 198, | „ 2·4  | „         | „                    |
| 1891-92..... | 208, | „ 2·5  | „         | „                    |
| 1892-93..... | 301, | „ 3·4  | „         | „                    |
| 1893-94..... | 289, | „ 3·1  | „         | „                    |

The years 1889-90 and 1892-93 (a very warm season) were the most drunken.

I have worked out the figures for each month for the five years, a graphic Chart (No. I.) of which I now hand round. You will see that the largest number of admissions occurred in January

(143), the next largest in July, while August is only a little way behind. I would ask you also to note the small subsidiary rise in the month of April. The large number of cases in January is explained, of course, by the New Year's drinking, and many of them were patients suffering from cut heads and other minor injuries while under the influence of drink. The rise in the admissions in July and August is probably due more to the Trades' Holidays and trips than to the warm weather, for it is notorious that June, especially of late years, has been a finer and warmer month than either of these, but still the admissions in June are not so numerous. In November the number of admissions is least (81), though February has not many more (87).

On separating the males from the females admitted during these five years and constructing a graphic chart for the months, it will be seen that the line representing the males closely corresponds to that of the total, but the difference between the January and the July admissions is more accentuated, while February, June, October, and November show the lowest figures. The majority of the females, on the other hand, were admitted from June to October, the earlier part of the year showing a decided minority.

I also show you Charts indicating the monthly admissions in each of the five years (Chart II. not reproduced here), in which you will notice a certain similarity of outline.

For purposes of comparison I have also written out in another Chart (Chart III.) the total deaths per month which occurred during the same period in eight of the principal towns of Scotland as recorded in the Registrar-General's returns. You will notice a most remarkable similarity between the two, only one month (November) being dissimilar. A maximum in January, a fall in February and March, a small spring rise followed by a greater summer one, an autumn fall, and an increase up to the maximum in January again.

#### TYPES.

The total of 1264 may be divided into—

|                                  |                        |                          |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Simple alcoholism,               | 649, or 51·3 per cent. | } 871, or 68·9 per cent. |
| Alcoholism with surgical injury, | 222, „ 17·5 „          |                          |
| Delirium tremens,                | 179, „ 14·1 „          |                          |
| Alcoholic neuritis,              | 101, „ 7·9 „           |                          |
| Mental symptoms other than D.T., | 49, „ 3·8 „            |                          |
| Alcoholic pneumonia,             | 45, „ 3·5 „            |                          |
| Acute alcoholic dyspepsia,       | 19, „ 1·5 „            |                          |

*Simple Alcoholism.*—649 cases: 481 males, 168 females.

Monthly admissions.—Jan., 83; Feb., 48; Mar., 46; Ap., 55; May, 47; June, 46; July, 66; Aug., 59; Sept., 38; Oct., 55; Nov., 41; Dec., 65.

CHART I.

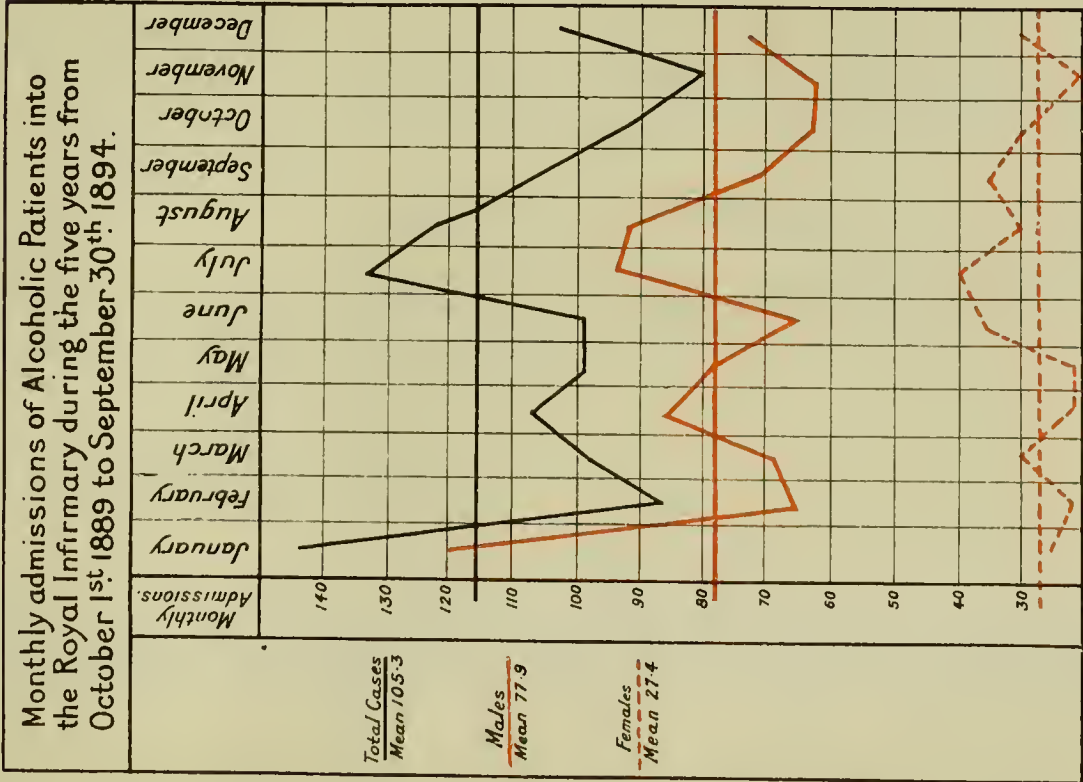


CHART III.

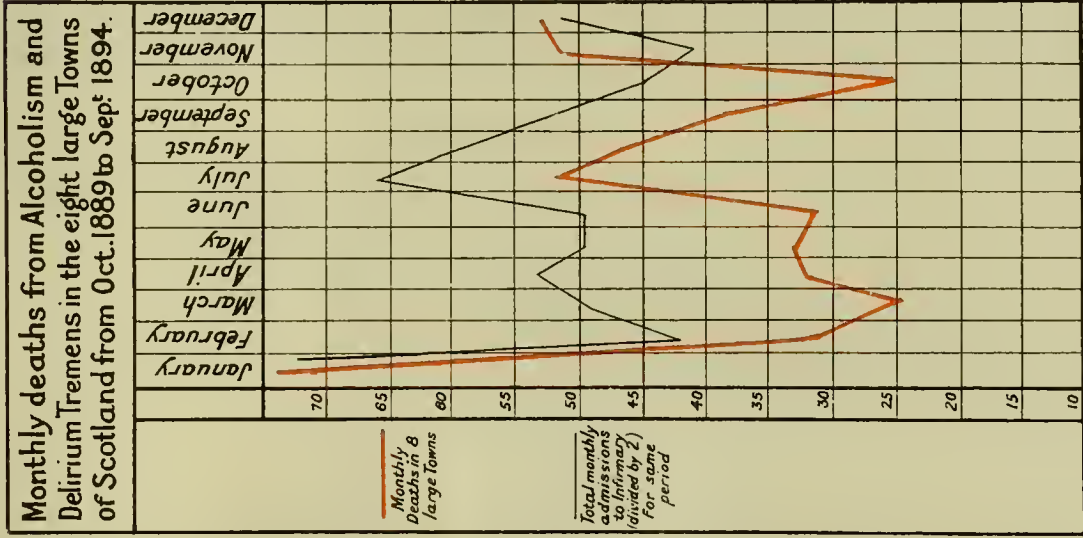
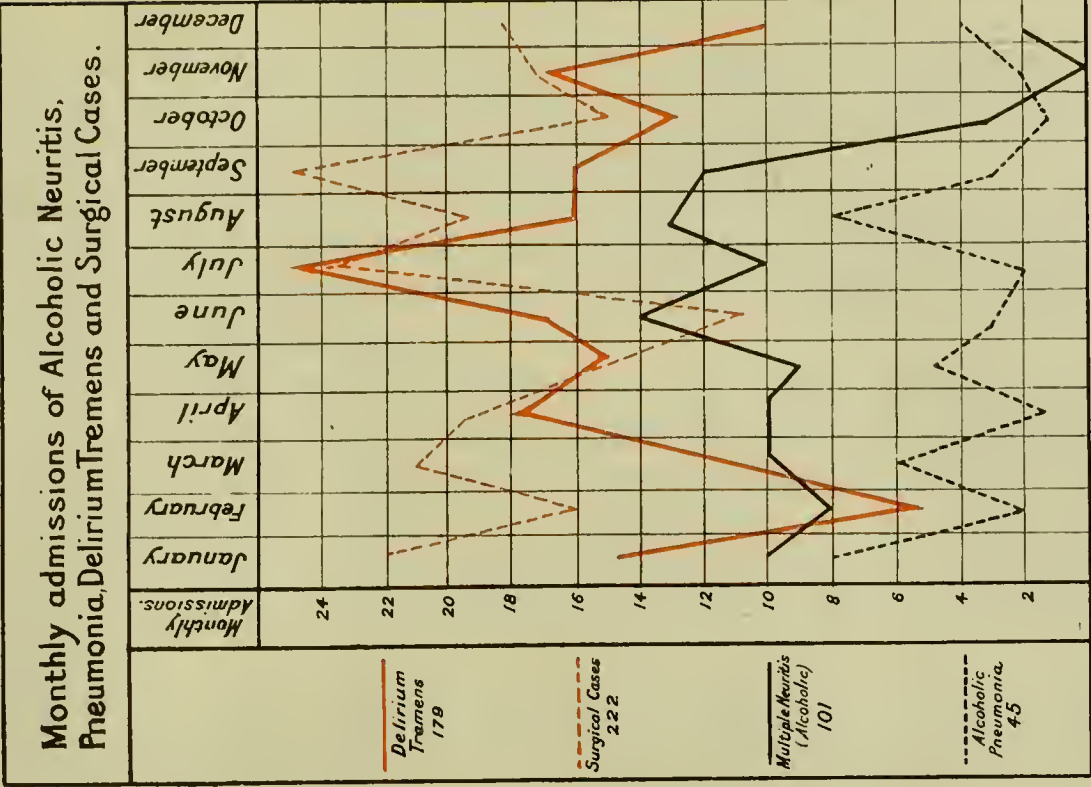


CHART IV.







*Delirium Tremens*.—179 cases: 154 males, 25 females. (See Chart (Chart IV.) for the monthly admissions). 107, or 59 per cent., were admitted from April to September.

*Surgical Cases*.—222 cases: 130 males (13 per cent. of total males), 92 females (28 per cent. of total females). The admissions are more equally distributed in the twelve months. There is, however, an excess in July.

*Neuritis*.—101 cases: 70 males (7·4 per cent. of total males), 31 females (9·3 per cent. of total females). Of the males, 43, or 61·4 per cent., were admitted in the summer six months from April to September; while of the females, 25, or 80·5 per cent., entered the hospital in the same period of the year. No case of alcoholic neuritis was admitted during the five years in the month of November.

*Mental Cases*.—49: males 37, females 12. There is nothing remarkable about the figures with regard to these, save the usual preponderance in summer.

*Pneumonia*.—45 cases; only 1 in a female.

Monthly admissions.—Jan., 8; Feb., 2; March, 6; April, 1; May, 5; June, 3; July, 2; Aug., 8; Sept., 3; Oct., 1; Nov., 2; Dec., 4.

*Digestive Cases*.—19 in number, chiefly occurred in summer.

#### OCCUPATIONS.

*Of the 329 women*, 169 were housewives.

|    |   |                             |
|----|---|-----------------------------|
| 33 | „ | laundresses.                |
| 21 | „ | charwomen.                  |
| 20 | „ | shopgirls and seamstresses. |
| 19 | „ | beggars, tramps, etc.       |
| 18 | „ | servants.                   |
| 18 | „ | factory hands.              |
| 10 | „ | girls at home.              |

Among the others, 5 were barmaids and 2 teachers.

60·9 per cent. of the housewives were admitted during the summer six months.

*Of the 935 males*—

461 were of the labouring class—labourers, 99; skilled labourers, 172; trade labourers, 161; factory workers, 16; railway employés, 13.

119 were of the shopkeeping class—shopkeepers, 85; travellers, 34.

108 were of the professional class—clerks, 49; others, 59.

84 belonged to the liquor trade.

68 were drivers, coachmen, etc.

26 beggars, tramps, etc.

69 had various occupations.

#### *The Labouring Class*, 461.

*Males*.—The labouring class generally were admitted especially in the months of January, April, and July, in that order;

those engaged in indoor trade drinking most in the early months of the year, those with more out-of-door employment exceeding in summer. 14·7 per cent. of the whole number developed delirium tremens, this being especially the case with the indoor workers with 17·8 per cent., who again were more prone to this in winter, the others in summer. Seventy-six cases had surgical injuries as well, or 16·4 per cent.; these were more common in those returned as purely labourers (28·1 per cent.), and were more numerous in summer.

*The Shopkeeping Class, 119.*

Monthly admissions.—Jan., 18; Feb., 9; March, 6; April, 11; May, 7; June, 11; July, 14; Aug., 9; Sept., 5; Oct., 7; Nov., 5; Dec., 5. They show the same maxima, January, July, and April.

*Delirium Tremens* cases numbered 21, or 12·6 per cent., chiefly in summer (26 per cent).

*The Professional Class, 108*, was comparatively large, and contained 49 clerks.

Monthly admissions.—Jan., 14; Feb., 5; March, 7; April, 8; May, 8; June, 5; July, 8; Aug., 14; Sept., 10; Oct., 9; Nov., 6; Dec., 13. Show two maxima, December and January, and July to September.

*Delirium Tremens* cases, 16, or 14·9 per cent.; 69 per cent. of them in the summer months. The mental cases were larger in proportion than in the other classes, 9, or 8·4 per cent.; 3·9 per cent. being the mean. The surgical cases, 7, or 6 per cent., were low.

*Liquor Trade, 84.*

Monthly admissions.—Jan., 10; Feb., 3; March, 5; April, 11; May, 11; June, 2; July, 12; Aug., 11; Sept., 2; Oct., 6; Nov., 7; Dec., 6. There was a slight preponderance in summer.

*Delirium Tremens*, 28, or 32·7 per cent. (16 per cent. is the mean for men), distributed equally over the year. There were only 2 cases of neuritis, and 10 surgical.

*Drivers, Cabmen, etc., 68.*

Monthly admissions.—Jan., 7; Feb., 5; March, 2; April, 1; May, 5; June, 3; July, 10; Aug., 5; Sept., 9; Oct., 8; Nov., 9; Dec., 4. Maxima, July and September to November. These are the wettest months.

*Delirium Tremens*, 8 cases, or 11·7 per cent. Surgical cases, 15, or 22 per cent.; higher than average, chiefly (73·3 per cent.) in summer.

*Beggars and Tramps, 26*, chiefly in summer.

Surgical cases, 26·9 per cent., a very high proportion.



*Of Various Occupations, 69.*

Comprising soldiers, sailors, postmen, etc. Six boys were quite young. Surgical cases, 19·6 per cent.

*Delirium Tremens*, 18 per cent.

Of the females, in whom the excess is still more marked in summer, the following notes may be made:—

*Delirium Tremens*, 25, or 7·6 per cent. Surgical cases, 92, or 28 per cent.; in men only 13 per cent.

*The Housewives*, 169, or 13·3 per cent. of whole admissions.

71 were alcoholic.

16 had D.T., or 9·5 per cent.

14 „ mental symptoms.

48 were surgical, or 28 per cent.

19 had neuritis, or 11·2 per cent., being above the average; all, save 1, occurred in summer.

1 „ pneumonia.

*Charwomen and Laundresses, 54.*

Maximum, March, and in summer.

26 were alcoholic.

24 „ surgical, 44·4 per cent. The most pugnacious of any.

2 „ neuritis.

*Shopgirls, Milliners, Servants, etc., 56.*

Maximum in January and February.

8 were neuritis, or 14·2 per cent., which is high.

5 „ delirium tremens.

*Other Females*.—Girls at home, 10; teachers, etc., 49.

Largely alcoholic simply, and were admitted for the most part in summer.

*General Mortality*.—Total mortality, 3·4 per cent.

5 of the 101 neuritic cases died, or 5 per cent.

28 of the 45 pneumonia cases died, or 55·5 per cent.

These, then, gentlemen, are the statistical notes derived from the Infirmary Registers during the last five years. The striking points about them, in my opinion, are the great excess of pure drunkenness in summer, due in all probability both to the heat and the holidays, the differences seen in the period at which labourers working outside and indoors get drunk, the large number, proportionately, of the professional class admitted, and the very quarrelsome nature of most of the women who were admitted the worse for alcoholic indulgence.

I hope you will derive some little interest from the details. I know that compiling them was to me a very considerable pleasure.



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